**PRAYING FOR A TEMPLE (1 Chr. 29:9-20) *MM online***

**Last time we thought all about David’s fundraising for building the Temple in Jerusalem. We read about it in 1 Chronicles ch. 29. Do you remember how all the people who could gave freely and gladly and how the King and everyone else rejoiced as the gold and silver flowed into the coffers? Those of you listening from Manor Mission Church will know all about our aspirations to rebuild our premises. I hope you’ve been able to contribute your own ideas to the consultation and perhaps you’ve been able to add to the funds. Without a doubt, there’s a lot more to do – listening, talking, planning, giving, building, thanksgiving and, then, *using* our brand new premises. After all, the funds came in in 1 Chronicles ch. 29, but the Temple wasn’t completed until 2 Chronicles ch. 5! I wouldn’t like to predict how many chapters there will be until the new Manor Mission Church is built!**

**But you do know that that’s the easy bit, don’t you? Planning, fundraising and building are important and essential, but they are not *the* most important and essential parts of the process. I remember a little gospel hall down to a handful of elderly members. Something had to be done – they needed new people. What did they do? They rebuilt the kitchen! That gospel hall is now used by another church and the remnant of the original church meet as a housegroup. Perhaps that’ how God wanted it….or, perhaps, that’s how it turned out because they confused Jesus’ promise to build His Church out of people (Mt. 16:18) with the much easier proposition of building a church ourselves out of bricks. I know of another church which has just put on a new roof that will last for thirty years, but, without making new disciples, their congregation will barely last another ten.**

**I think David understood this, because, after all the excitement of the beginning of chapter 29, what did David do next? He *prayed*:**

**1 Chr. 29:10-20**

**Now, we’re told that David sang his psalm and uttered his prayer *in the presence of the whole assembly (v. 10)* and either he or someone else must have written it down. I think Jesus must have read it and knew it, because, when He taught His disciples how to pray in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 6:9-13), He seemed to be remembering David’s prayer*.* Think of that prayer that we call the Lord’s Prayer: do you notice any similarities between that most famous of prayers and David’s prayer?**

* **David called God *the ruler of all things (v. 12);* Jesus agreed and said that God has a kingdom and He prayed that it would come on earth through our obedience.**
* **David prayed, *Yours….is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendour….Yours….is the kingdom (v. 11)*; sound familiar? Jesus prayed, *yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory.***
* **David prayed that God is *from everlasting to everlasting (v. 10)*; while Jesus prayed, *yours is the kingdom….for ever and ever.***
* **David praised God’s *glorious name*; and Jesus agreed and asked that His name might be hallowed.**
* **David acknowledged that they couldn’t have given anything unless God had first given to them; Jesus agreed and asked that God would, therefore, give us all we need – *our daily bread* – with the sure expectation that we would be generous in return. *Freely you have received; freely give,* He said elsewhere (Mt. 10:8).**
* **When David prayed that Solomon and the people might have that** **loyalty, obedience and wholehearted devotion (vv. 18-19), well, what is that but just another way of praying Jesus’ prayer, *lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil*? Loyalty, obedience and wholehearted devotion are guaranteed to do just that – lead us out of temptation and away from evil.**

**Of course, Jesus developed and augmented David’s prayer. *Forgive us our trespasses,* He prayed, with the idea of the remittance of debt. But isn’t one of the central ideas of David’s prayer that we are all hopelessly in debt to God? *Wealth and honour come from you,* he said (v. 12) and he went on to declare that, without God, we are *without hope (v. 15).***

***Forgive those who trespass against us,* said Jesus. David doesn’t pray about forgiving others – that’s not the purpose of his prayer - but I do catch a faint amen in David’s words. He calls God *the God of our fathers Abraham, Isaac and Israel* – in other words, the God of His own people, the Jews – and yet he prays, remarkably: *We are foreigners and strangers in your sight, as were all our ancestors (v. 15).* In other words, there’s no difference: we all need God’s grace and forgiveness, Jew and gentile alike. And how can we have those hearts of integrity we’re praying for, if we, who are asking for forgiveness withhold it from others?**

**But, of course, Jesus introduced that novel and shocking idea into His prayer of calling God *Our Father.* Yet David’s prayer is clearly addressed to a father figure: it’s respectful, acknowledging His authority and power; it expresses the dependence of a child on his father; and, when he calls his people *foreigners and strangers,* surely he’s declaring, therefore, that God must have *adopted* them into His family – He has *become* their Father. It’s like being born again (Jn. 3:7).**

**In Laindon, we’re trying to build a new church. It’s only purpose – however it is used – is to help people to come to know who their Father is; to learn to thank Him; to receive His forgiveness and to extend it to others; to receive spiritual power to overcome temptation and to do His will; and to enter into His life forever and ever, amen! Some of you listening are from elsewhere and your premises are perfectly adequate, but, regardless, we’re all builders! We are all serving Jesus the Master-builder as He builds His church (Mt. 16:18) – we are His bricklayers! David had all the resources he needed. But he didn’t dare do anything until he had prayed.**

**How should we pray, whatever we’re building? Like David the king - with humility and respect, but also with confidence because, on Jesus’ authority, we are coming in prayer to our *Father.* And Father knows best.**